



Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, July 31, 2019

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DEM, RIDOH ANNOUNCE REOPENING OF WINNAPaug AND POINT JUDITH PONDS TO SHELLFISHING

Unsafe bacterial counts forced the closure of Winnapaug Pond on July 26 and Point Judith Pond on July 27. These waters are now safe for the harvesting of shellfish and will reopen at sunrise tomorrow, August 1.

PROVIDENCE – The Department of Environmental Management (DEM) and Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) are announcing that all waters of Winnapaug Pond in Westerly and waters of Point Judith Pond in Narragansett and South Kingstown that were affected by last week's emergency closure will reopen to shellfishing at sunrise tomorrow, August 1.

The agencies enacted the closures because water samples collected last week had unsafe bacteria levels, likely caused by stormwater runoff from the more than three inches of rain that fell on July 22 and 23 in southern Rhode Island. RIDOH initiated a recall of shellfish harvested either commercially or recreationally in both waterbodies since July 23.

On July 29, DEM collected water samples to test for fecal coliform bacteria in response to the emergency closures. Results completed this afternoon from RIDOH's laboratory analysis indicated that these waters are now suitable for the harvesting of shellfish. Commercial harvesters may resume shellfishing using the 6P tagging designation for Point Judith Pond, and aquaculturists may resume normal operations of their leases.

Shellfishing remains restricted in the waters of Winnapaug Pond and Point Judith Pond that are classified as prohibited or seasonally closed. Status of emergency closures and of the CONDITIONALLY APPROVED areas of Upper Narragansett Bay, Greenwich Bay, Mount Hope Bay, and the Kickemuit River may be obtained 24 hours a day by calling DEM's shell fishing hotline at 401-222-2900. [Shellfish area maps](#) are available on [DEM's website](#).

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